

**In the claims:**

1        1. In a radio communication system having a mobile station operable to  
2        communicate by way of a first network pursuant to a first-network communication service  
3        subscription, the first network operable pursuant to a first communication-standard protocol and  
4        the first network coupled to a second network, the second network operable pursuant to a second  
5        communication standard protocol, an improvement of apparatus for facilitating invocation of a  
6        second-network service, resident at a second-network service control point, by the mobile  
7        station, said apparatus comprising:

8                    a bridge mechanism coupled to receive a first-network-generated request for  
9                    invocation of the second-network service by the mobile station, said bridge mechanism at least  
10                  for selectively initiating authorization of the mobile station to involve the second-network  
11                  service.

1        2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first network comprises a legacy network,  
2        wherein the second network comprises a new network and the second-network service comprises  
3        a new-network service, the new network service unavailable at the legacy network, and wherein  
4        the request to which said bridge mechanism is coupled to receive comprises a first  
5        communication-standard protocol message.

1        3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said bridge mechanism comprises a first  
2        communication-standard protocol message detector, said first communication-standard protocol  
3        message detector for detecting the first communication-standard protocol message that requests  
4        the invocation of the second-network service.

1           4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein said bridge mechanism further comprises a  
2 second communication-standard, protocol-request message generator for generating a second  
3 communication standard protocol-request message for communication to the second-network  
4 service control point to request invocation of the second-network service by the mobile station.

1           5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said bridge mechanism further comprises a  
2 second communication-standard, protocol-response message detector for detecting a second  
3 communication-standard protocol-response message generated by the second-network service  
4 control point and returned to said bridge mechanism.

1           6. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said bridge mechanism further comprises a first  
2 communication standard, protocol-response message generator coupled to receive indications of  
3 detection by said second communication-standard, protocol-response message detector of the  
4 second communication-standard protocol-response message, said first communication-standard  
5 protocol-response message generator for generating a first communication standard-protocol  
6 response message indicative of a value of the second communication-standard protocol response  
7 message.

1           7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said bridge mechanism comprises a first  
2 functional part functionally operable pursuant to the first communication-standard protocol and a  
3 second functional part functionally operable pursuant to the second communication-standard  
4 protocol.

1        8.     The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the radio communication station comprises a  
2     cellular communication system, wherein the first network is constructed pursuant to a  
3     communication standard that defines a media gateway and wherein the first functional part  
4     comprises media gateway functionality.

1        9.     The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the second network is constructed pursuant to a  
2     communication standard that defines a softswitch and wherein the second functional part  
3     comprises softswitch functionality.

1        10.    The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the second-network service comprises a prepaid  
2     calling service and wherein the request for the invocation of the second-network service to which  
3     said bridge mechanism is coupled to receive comprises a request for the invocation of the  
4     prepaid calling service.

1        11.    The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the first network comprises a registry at which  
2     service-subscription information associated with the mobile station is stored, the service-  
3     subscription information including an indication of association of the mobile station with the  
4     second-network service, and wherein the request for invocation of the second-network service to  
5     which said bridge mechanism is provided thereto subsequent to access to the service-subscription  
6     information stored at the registry.

1        12.    The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the request for the invocation of the second-  
2     network service is detected by the first functional part of said bridge mechanism.

1           13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the authorization selectively initiated by said  
2 bridge mechanism is provided by the second functional part of said bridge mechanism.

1           14. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the authorization selectively initiated by the  
2 second functional part of said bridge mechanism comprises a second-communication-standard  
3 protocol-formatted request routable by the second functional part to the second-network service  
4 control point.

1        15. In a method for communicating in a radio communication system having a mobile  
2 station operable to communicate by way of a first network pursuant to a first-network  
3 communication service subscription, the first network operable pursuant to a first  
4 communication-standard protocol and the first network coupled to a second network, the second  
5 network operable pursuant to a second communication-standard protocol, an improvement of a  
6 method for facilitating invocation of a second-network service, resident at a second-network  
7 service control point, by the mobile station, said method comprising:

8                generating a first-communication-standard protocol message at the first network

9                to request invocation of the second-network service by the mobile station; and

10                generating a second-communication-standard protocol message responsive to the  
11 first-communication-standard protocol message generated during said operation of  
12 generating the first-communication-standard protocol message, the second-communication-  
13 standard protocol message generated at the second network and representative of the request for  
14 the invocation of the second-network service by the mobile station.

1        16. The method of claim 15 comprising the further operations of:

2                routing the second-communication-standard protocol message to the second-

3                network service control point; and

4                selectively granting the request for the invocation of the second-network service

5                subsequent to delivery of the second-communication-standard protocol message to the second-

6                network service control point.

1        17. The method of claim 16 comprising the further operation of:  
2                    generating a grant message at the second-network service control point, the grant  
3                    message formatted pursuant to the second communication standard protocol.

1        18. The method of claim 17 comprising the further operation of:  
2                    converting the grant message into a second-communication-standard protocol-  
3                    formatted message.

1        19. The method of claim 18 wherein the first network comprises a legacy network  
2                    and the second network comprises a new network, wherein the second-network service  
3                    comprises a new-network service unavailable at the legacy network, and wherein the first-  
4                    communication-standard protocol message generated during said operation of generating the  
5                    first-communication-standard protocol message requests invocation of the new-network service  
6                    by the mobile station operable pursuant to the legacy network.

1        20. The method of claim 16 wherein the first-communication-standard message is  
2                    provided to a bridge mechanism bridging the first network and the second network, and wherein  
3                    the second-communication-standard protocol message is generated by the bridge mechanism.